Executive Summary & Grant Rationale

Your response to the outline below should be no longer than two pages.

This information may be made public.

After you’ve completed the preceding application and reviewed the Awarding Grants – Selection Criteria & Weights pages that follow this page, please reflect on your application responses and provide a brief executive summary and grant rationale that includes:

- Brief project description/summary (less than 150 words)

In a funding partnership with the State of Indiana, Comcast Cable Communications, LLC, or its subsidiary, will extend service to 407 unserved homes and businesses in the Town of Darlington in Montgomery County. This Next Level Connections project will enable Comcast to improve unserved levels to 1 gigabit per second down and 100 megabits up by December 31, 2020. Darlington will have access to some of the fastest and most reliable broadband speeds available nationwide. Providing broadband service to this unserved area will benefit the entire Darlington community – both residents and businesses, alike. Having access to broadband will enable residents to bridge the local skills gap, expand their career pathway, lower local unemployment rates and improve their overall quality of life. Businesses will be better able to engage in on-line sales and marketing, improve manufacturing processes and efficiencies, increase the area’s attractiveness for entrepreneurs and start-up entities, create economic development opportunities for the Town and help in the creation and retention of jobs. Total eligible project cost is $897,783. Applicant match is $342,033.

- A general geographic location of the project (not census blocks) and total number of passings estimated to be made as a result of the grant project

The Town of Darlington is located in Montgomery County. Proposed service area includes homes and businesses located within the Town of Darlington and this project expects to pass 407 homes and businesses.

- A brief description of the applicant’s involvement in the project to date and how the applicant (and/or partners) intends to manage and sustain the project

While Comcast continues to review opportunities to expand our network, as the Broadband Grant Program recognizes, there are areas in the State that do not fit the traditional economic model of prudent investment. The Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program has opened up opportunities to serve communities currently unserved by broadband service. With the Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program’s support, the economics of deploying broadband infrastructure to these areas make the project feasible, which would allow the state and Comcast to work together to reach a common goal – bringing best in-class communications services to this community.

Comcast proposes to deploy new broadband plant in the Town of Darlington. Comcast commits to maintain our Network in a state of good operation and repair consistent with applicable industry standards as exemplified by the multiple Operator of the Year awards we’ve earned and the numerous patents for award-winning technology that we hold.
- A statement on how broadband improvements will advance the quality of life and strengthen economic development opportunities in the communities in the project area

Comcast has changed the Internet experience for millions of customers by providing some of the fastest and most reliable Internet services in the nation. Our network structure offers the most flexibility now and into the future. We can surgically add speed, capacity and fiber to our networks in a smart and economically feasible way. Our existing network is built for innovation and will only get better as new technologies emerge.

For businesses to retain and attract the necessary workforce, it is critical for communities to have access to fast and reliable Internet. Comcast has increased its speeds 17 times over the past 17 years. This new workforce needs high-speed Internet access. With up to 1 Gbps Internet speeds becoming available to entrepreneurs in the Town of Darlington, it provides residents access to vast online resources and worldwide marketplace.

Providing broadband service to this unserved area will enable businesses to engage in on-line sales and marketing, improve manufacturing processes and efficiencies, increase the area’s attractiveness for entrepreneurs and start-up entities, create economic development opportunities for the County and help in the creation and retention of jobs.

With up to 1 Gbps Internet speeds becoming available to home-based businesses and entrepreneurs, it will put them on par with Lafayette and Indianapolis. Having access to broadband offers the potential to residents to bridge the local skills gap, expand their career pathway, lower local unemployment rates, increase the tax base, and improve the quality of life for the surrounding areas.

Comcast promotes broadband adoption by working with a network of nonprofit, government, school district, and library partners to distribute flyers and raise awareness about the digital divide. This work is embedded in the community and includes being present at back- to- school nights, hosting meetings with Title 1 schools and families, and attending school and community events. In the State of Indiana alone, the program has connected more than 176,000 eligible low-income people in 44,000 households, and over 23,200 individuals in northeast Indiana. Expanding our network to Darlington would provide eligible residents access to Internet Essentials.

*Internet Essentials* from Comcast is the nation’s largest and most comprehensive high-speed Internet adoption program for low-income Americans. It was launched in 2011 and provides low-cost, high-speed Internet service for $9.95 per month plus tax; the option to purchase an Internet-ready computer for under $150; and multiple options to access free digital literacy training in print, online, and in person. Through *Internet Essentials* and its tens of thousands of partners, Comcast has connected more than 6 million low-income Americans in 1.5 million households to the power of the Internet in their homes. More information can be found at [www.internetessentials.com](http://www.internetessentials.com).